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THE EDITOR

The recent photographic salon at the Art Institute of Chicago was a pronounced artistic success. Those most competent to judge declared it represented the highest standards of amateur work ever exhibited. Two galleries were charmingly hung, and each photograph was fairly seen, a condition which is rarely possible in exhibitions of paintings. There was no lack of variety, while the individuality displayed was notable. Conspicuous taste was shown in the framing, the choice of woods and mounts having been dictated by the color or tone of the prints.

While very gratifying to the artistically inclined, the exhibition has been criticised by the photographer as not being photographic enough. The gum print allows manipulation, and introduces an element of danger which is clearly seen in certain works. Too much brush-work destroys the inherent qualities of photography, and results in work that can less and less come under its category. The arts are limited, and photography is not an exception. It must not include the art of the painter unless it wishes to lose its right to be called a photograph.

In landscape the brush-work gives a certain novelty of texture and we-wonder-how-it-is-done look, but at a lamentable loss of values and real landscape quality. There is enough purely legitimate photography in this salon to sufficiently demonstrate the possession of artistic qualities of a very high order in the ones who touched the button. To force, repress, and modify the gum print by means of a brush in the hand of one who is neither figure, head, nor landscape painter is to run the chance of a failure every time. The writer believes the legitimate, honestly developed and printed negative will give the artistic photographer all the means he needs to express the emotions of beauty that within him burn.

This exhibition has demonstrated again that photography is more than a science, and that the personal qualities of the man behind the lens may declare him an artist.



Fifth Avenue, New York, is becoming one of the great picture headquarters of the world. Its fine galleries and print-shops are drawing all the good things from everywhere. The season just closing has been remarkably fruitful. Sales and prices count, and if they obtain on Fifth Avenue there will be no lack of the best in art. A cosmopolitan artist was heard to remark that, excepting the Louvre in Paris and the National Gallery in London, he could see more fine

things in New York than in any other city he knew of in Europe. If this is true, it is significative, for it shows that America is more and more alive in matters of art, and where the activity is, there will be the pictures.



The Paris Exposition is open, and the American section of the fine arts is finally arranged. Rumors of discontent have been coming to us from over the sea. The foreign-American contingent abroad found this time that it did not control the walls, as was too truly the state of affairs in 1889. The home-grown product is fairly represented, and thanks are cheerfully extended to the art commission for the excellent and thoroughly above-board manner of all its actions. America will be comprehensively represented in Paris this summer.



There has been much activity in the municipal art movement in Chicago this last month. The Art Commission has been organized; the Municipal Art League has completed its organization, with Mr. Franklin MacVeagh for president (a very fortunate choice); while the Chicago Art Association held an enthusiastic meeting and decried the presence of the gaudy billboard. When property-owners realize that these hideous, staring, insulting structures are a detriment to their holdings, and when pedestrians or humble citizens in sufficient number declare that they have some rights, the billboard will go. The entrances to our parks and boulevards are rendered obnoxious by these blatant boards. Beautiful vistas have a background of decorated fences, while houses, doors, trees, barns, are made to howl with raucous color. If people should cry their wares with voice and gesture to such lengths as would make them nuisances, they could or should be arrested. These outrageous signs yell all the time, and there is no redress! We simply look on and do nothing. In the mean time carpenters are building other billboards, while "artists" are waiting with their paint-pots. The gradual suppression of the billboard is the work the Chicago Art Association has now in hand. It will seek first the coöperation of the park boards, as they are intimately interested. Afterward the public will be made not only to see, but to feel that these blots on the municipal horizon must be removed. Public opinion rules, and until public opinion is sufficiently aroused the billboard will remain. It will take time, but it is worth the trouble.